



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
**Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value**  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER TRAINEE  
ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

Class No. 005707  
Class No. 005703

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

To patrol a designated area to enforce animal control laws and ordinances, issue citations, impound animals; and to perform related work.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

The Animal Control Officer class series is allocated to the Department of Animal Services, and is responsible for the enforcement of a wide variety of state laws and local ordinances regulating the possession, humane treatment, handling, confinement, transportation, use and disposal of animals. This class differs from other law enforcement classes in that the Animal Control Officer classes are non-sworn peace officers, but may exercise the power of arrest, serve warrants and use firearms to tranquilize animals. Animal Control Officer classes differ from Animal Care Attendants in that the latter perform manual work and animal care work at an animal shelter.

Animal Control Officer Trainee:

This is the entry-level class in this series. Under immediate supervision, incumbents learn to perform progressively more independent and responsible animal control fieldwork. Animal Control Officer Trainees do not use a firearm.

Animal Control Officer:

This is the journey-level class in this class series. Under general supervision, incumbents handle the full range of animal control work and provide technical guidance and training to Animal Control Trainees. This class differs from the Supervising Animal Control Officer in that the latter is responsible for supervising the day-to-day operations of an animal shelter.

■ FUNCTIONS

**The examples of functions listed in the class specification(s) are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class(es). Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.**

Animal Control Officer Trainee

Essential Functions:

1. Drives a radio-dispatched animal control vehicle to patrol assigned areas and locate animal(s) reported.
2. Responds to citizen complaints and investigates alleged violations of animal laws and regulatory ordinances.
3. Talks with the public to determine animal identity and ownership.
4. Visually inspects animal(s) to determine medical condition, care received, and decides on most appropriate course of action to prevent inhumane treatment of animals.
5. Advises and explains laws and regulations related to the control, licensing, vaccination, adoption and care of animals.
6. Issues warnings; sets -up return inspection calls to ensure compliance with laws and ordinances.
7. Picks-up and impounds stray, sick, injured, unwanted and abandoned animals.
8. Transports animal(s) to animal shelter, veterinary hospital, or other facility as needed.
9. Keeps record of daily activities and enters into a computer.
10. Cleans and maintains equipment used in the performance of duties.

11. Assists other patrol officers with work.
12. Performs euthanasia on animal(s) in the field as needed.
13. Educates the public on issues such as humane animal treatment standards, anti-cruelty laws, and responsible pet ownership.
14. May sell animal licenses and collect fees.
15. Provides responsive, high quality service to County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public by providing accurate, complete and up-to-date information, in a courteous, efficient and timely manner.

#### Animal Control Officer

##### Essential Functions

All the duties listed above and

1. Investigates animal bites.
2. Captures or kills, as necessary, suspected rabid and/or unrestrained vicious animals in order to allow peace officers, medical examiners, etc., to perform their duties.
3. Operates a tranquilizer gun to subdue animals.
4. Quarantines potentially rabid animals and issues citations for violation thereof.
5. Assists at traffic accidents, crime scenes, or disasters to control, capture, transport, and perform euthanasia.
6. Impounds illegal or dangerous animals.
7. Issues citations to animal owners for violations of animal care laws.
8. Works with other agencies to ensure that animal control laws and regulations are enforced.
9. Performs callbacks, investigative work, and produces written reports.
10. Provides testimony at administrative and court hearings;
11. May inspect businesses with guard dogs, kennels, stables, ranches, and corrals for proper fencing, sanitation, humane animal treatment, and licensing purposes.

#### ■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

##### Knowledge of:

- Laws, regulations and ordinances governing animal impound, release, quarantine and destruction.
- Legal liabilities and responsibilities of those involved with the enforcement of animal control regulations.
- Methods and techniques of investigation including rules of evidence, laws of arrest, and court procedures.
- Physical and behavioral characteristics of common dogs, cats, and livestock.
- Animal care, feeding and handling.
- Record keeping methods and filing.
- Common disease symptoms in domestic animals.
- Methods and techniques of humane euthanasia.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

##### Skills and Abilities to:

- Comprehend, interpret, enforce, and apply animal control regulatory ordinances and state laws, regulations governing licensing, rabies abatement and prevention.
- Analyze solutions and apply established procedures to enforce animal control and anti-cruelty laws.
- Humanely perform euthanasia.
- Recognize normal and abnormal animal behavior.
- Handle, catch, restrain, confine, and transport animals using methods, techniques, and/or special equipment.
- Issue written warnings.
- Patrol designated areas daily for long periods.
- Utilize tact, self-restrain, judgment, and strategy in dealing with a wide variety of people, both friendly and hostile.
- Use mobile radio/telephone equipment.
- Read maps and locate addresses in the field.
- Use computerized equipment in recording daily work activities.

- Understand and follow written and oral instructions.
- Effectively communicate orally and in writing.
- Establish effective working relationships with management, employees, employee representatives and the public representing diverse cultures and backgrounds.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

Animal Control Officer (in addition to the above):

- Work alone in the field.
- Issue citations.
- Use a firearm to tranquilize animals.
- Analyze situations and use good judgment in the enforcement of animal control and anti-cruelty laws.
- Assist in back-up and special task force operations related to animal disaster or safety situations.
- Conduct investigations and prepare written reports.
- Provide testimonies in hearings or in court.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

Animal Control Officer Trainee:

1. Six (6) months of experience handling and caring for domestic animals, or dealing with the public in a service related capacity; OR
2. Possession of Registration as a Veterinary Technician with the State of California; OR
3. Completion of at least thirty (30) semester college units from an accredited college or university with coursework related to animal control, law enforcement, or criminal justice.

Animal Control Officer:

1. One (1) year as an Animal Control Officer Trainee with the County of San Diego; OR,
2. One (1) year of experience as a humane officer or animal control officer at a humane society or animal control agency.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

**The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification(s). Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.**

Constant lifting and carrying of objects weighing up to 10 pounds and occasionally up to 100 pounds with a maximum distance of five feet. Frequent standing and walking; sufficient stamina to exert physical effort to restrain animals for a substantial period.

Sufficient manual dexterity and eye-hand coordination required to operate vehicle and special animal handling equipment. Wears a utility belt that may weigh up to 10 pounds.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

#### Certification/Registration

##### Animal Control Officer Trainee

Employees must complete a certified Penal Code 832 course in arrest and firearms before the end of their probationary period. Employees who do not complete the required training shall be terminated before, or at the end of probationary period.

##### Animal Control Officer

Must have completed a certified Penal Code 832 course in arrest and firearms.

#### Firearms Qualifications

##### Animal Control Officer

Must obtain firearms proficiency certificate to use tranquilizer gun before completion of probationary period and must maintain firearms proficiency certificate thereafter.

#### Uniform Requirement

A uniform is required.

#### Working Conditions

Works irregular shifts, weekends and holidays. Subject to standby, callback and reassignment to any animal shelter as needed.

Work is predominantly performed outdoors, driving, and animal shelter environments in varying temperatures; exposure to excessive noise (such as barking dogs); animal waste and dead animals; dust, chemicals from cleaning agents/disinfectants; and sewage and zoonotic diseases.

#### Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Misdemeanor and/or felony convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation.

#### Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in these classes shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

**New: November 21, 1997**

**Revised: October 17, 2003**

**Reviewed: Spring 2004**

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Union Code: PS  
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Variable Entry: N  
Variable Entry: Y